

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

REC'D 31 MAR 2004

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10/524897

Applicant's or agent's file reference 3961-021517	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/US02/24579	International filing date (day/month/year) 01 August 2002 (01.08.2002)	Priority date (day/month/year) 01 August 2001 (01.08.2001)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC(7): F16B 07/10 and US Cl.: 403/109.5, 211, 318, 350, 355, 374.1, 379.4, 409.1		
Applicant JOHN GUROSIK		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing reifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 0 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of report with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 18 November 2002 (18.11.2002)	Date of completion of this report 16 December 2003 (16.12.2003)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: IPEA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313- 1450 Facsimile No. (703)305-3230	Authorized officer <i>Donna Wildermuth</i> Lynne Browne Telephone No. (703) 308- 1113

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☒ the international application as originally filed.
- ☒ the description:
pages 1-9 _____ as originally filed
pages NONE _____, filed with the demand
pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____.
- ☒ the claims:
pages 10-12 _____ as originally filed
pages NONE _____, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
pages NONE _____, filed with the demand
pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____.
- ☒ the drawings:
pages 1-2 _____, as originally filed
pages NONE _____, filed with the demand
pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____.
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
pages NONE _____, as originally filed
pages NONE _____, filed with the demand
pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____.

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis _____ of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in printed form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages NONE
- ☐ the claims, Nos. NONE
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/fig NONE

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US02/2457

V. Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. STATEMENT

Novelty (N)	Claims 1-20	YES
	Claims NONE	NO
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims 1-20	YES
	Claims NONE	NO
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims 1-20	YES
	Claims NONE	NO

2. CITATIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Claims 1-20 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest all of the claimed limitations.

As to Claim 1, Geertson U.S. Patent 6095255 discloses (fig.3) a coupling apparatus, comprising: a first coupling element (23a, 23b, 25a, 25b, 27) having a first end (top of 23a, 23b) and a second end (bottom of 25a, 25b), including: a mating surface (inner surfaces of 23a, 23b, 25a, 25b facing 32) positioned between the first coupling element first end and the first coupling element second end; a wedging surface (surface of the top of 27 contacting 34) positioned on the first end of the first coupling element; an engagement surface (surface of the bottom of 27 contacting 34) positioned on the second end of the first coupling element; and at least one alignment orifice (orifices receiving 24 and 26); and a second coupling element (32) having a first end (top of 32) and a second end (bottom of 32) adapted to releasably attach to the first coupling element, including: a mating surface (outer surfaces of 32 facing 23a, 23b, 25a, 25b) configured to abut the mating surface of the first coupling element; at least one wedge member (34) positioned on the first end of the second coupling element and having a wedge member surface (outer surfaces of 34) extending from the second coupling element mating surface configured to engage the wedging surface of the first coupling element, the wedge member having distal end (bottom of 34) positioned lower than a wedge member proximal end (top end of 34); at least one alignment member (24, 26) extending from the second coupling element mating surface and configured to extend at least partially through the at least one alignment orifice. The prior art does not disclose or suggest a locking tab extending from the mating surface and configured to abut the engagement surface at the second end of the first coupling element.

Further regarding claim 1, Warren U.S. Patent 1622619 discloses (figs. 1-3) a coupling apparatus, comprising: a first coupling element (C) having a first end (top of C) and a second end (bottom of C), including: a mating surface (surface of C contacting left side of 1) positioned between the first coupling element first end and the first coupling element second end; a wedging surface (top right outer surface of C) positioned on the first end of the first coupling element; an engagement surface (bottom surface of C) positioned on the second end of the first coupling element; and at least one alignment orifice (orifice of C receiving W); and a second coupling element (1) having a first end (bottom of 1) and a second end (top of 1) adapted to releasably attach to the first coupling element, including: a mating surface (left surface of 1 contacting C) configured to abut the mating surface of the first coupling element and having a wedge member surface extending from the second coupling element mating surface configured to engage the wedging surface of the first coupling element, the wedge member having distal end positioned lower than a wedge member proximal end; at least one alignment member extending from the second coupling element mating surface and configured to extend at least partially through the at least one alignment orifice; and a locking tab extending from the mating surface and configured to abut the engagement surface at the second end of the first coupling element.

Claims 2-20 depend from claim 1 and thus similarly meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3).

Claims 1-20 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus have industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.

NEW CITATIONS